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ABSTRACT

An evolving educational alternative, The Free School, has undergone many changes since its inception in 1971, which has made evaluation difficult. The end of year report, therefore, is presented in a principally narrative form utilizing case histories and personal comments, although pertinent graphs and charts are included. Among the difficulties facing the school was the problem of imposing a necessary structure on a form which seemed to fundamentally demand maximum freedom for students, staff, and volunteers. Student behavior problems and black student transfer contributes to the school's dilemma of how to provide productive freedom without sacrificing educational and social objectives. A governing board composed of students, staff, and parents was formed in 1973 in order to address such problems. The board, perceived effective in the function of hiring and evaluating staff, was not productive in other areas, illustrated by the fact that most school decisions were made on a crisis basis. (BJG)

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SOUTHEAST ALTERNATIVES FREE SCHOOL

END-OF-YEAR REPORT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS REPORT WAS PREPARED
BY THE FREE SCHOOL EVALUATION
DEPARTMENT OF THE MINNEAPOLIS
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SHOULD NOT BE USED AS A
SUBSTITUTE FOR AN INDIVIDUAL
REPORT FROM THE FREE SCHOOL
EVALUATOR.

Prepared by

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June 25, 1974

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This is an SEA Level I formative evaluation report, prepared as part of the Free School evaluation effort. Contact Pat Korges, Free School evaluator, for further information.

Southeast Alternatives-Minneapolis Public Schools

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON SOUTHEAST ALTERNATIVES

December, 1973

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The Experimental Schools Program (ESP), a plan testing comprehensive change in education, was initiated in 1971 with the intent to bridge the gap from research and experimentation to practice.

The experimental schools concept became a reality when Congress appropriated \$12 million for the fiscal year 1971 following President Nixon's message on education reform, March 30, 1970. The program was first sponsored by the United States Office of Education and now is directed by the National Institute of Education (NIE).

The Minneapolis Public School District was one of eight school districts throughout the nation that received \$10,000 planning grants to prepare a proposal for a single comprehensive K-12 project. In May, 1971 three of the eight districts, Minneapolis Public Schools, Berkeley Unified School District of Berkeley, California and Franklin Pierce School District of Tacoma, Washington, were selected as experimental school sites. There are 18 experimental school sites as of 1973.

Southeast Alternatives, the name given to the Minneapolis Public Schools' Experimental School Project, was funded for five years. On June 1, 1971, a 27-month operation grant of \$3,580,877 was made to the school district. A final 33-month contract for \$3,036,722 was approved by the National Institute of Education (NIE) on May 22, 1973.

Major factors in the selection of southeast Minneapolis as the site for the Minneapolis program were its commitment to a comprehensive proposal, past record of responsible innovation, and plan for providing parent choice of alternative schools. The 2,200 K-12 students in the project include a racially and economically diverse urban population. Southeast Minneapolis,

bounded by factories, flour mills, freeways, multiple dwellings, residential neighborhoods, shopping areas and railroads, also houses the main campus of the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. Stately old homes, low income apartments and expensive condominiums are all located in the area. This mixture of ages, occupations, interests, and life styles supports a diversity of views about the nature of public education which the five SEA alternative schools of parent choice reflect.

The central theme of Southeast Alternatives is to provide comprehensive change in the educational structure and programs for the better education of children. The change is accomplished by offering choices to students, teachers, and parents in the types of educational programs available, involving students, faculty and parents in educational decision-making processes and decentralizing the administrative structure of the school district to local schools.

At the elementary level four major alternative school programs are offered:

The Contemporary School at Tuttle utilizes the graded, primarily self-contained classroom structure. The basic skills of mathematics and language are developed through an individualized multi-text, multi-media approach. Students flow between their base rooms and a variety of learning centers to participate in learning activities throughout the entire school day.

The Continuous Progress primary at Pratt and the Continuous Progress intermediate at Motley allow each child to advance at his own pace without regard to grade level. Mornings are highly structured with language arts, math and social studies. Afternoons are used for two week interest groups designed and implemented by students, faculty and staff, parents and volunteers.

The Open School at Marcy offers flexible curriculum, scheduling and age grouping, with emphasis on helping children to learn to think, and to learn to make independent judgments.

The Free School (K-12) has curriculum flexibility allowing the student to pursue areas he or she wishes to develop and experience with emphasis on making the curriculum relevant to present day issues and on enhancing students' skills, knowledge and inner autonomy for acting as free people in an environment of rapid, almost radical change. The Free School is particularly committed to recognize and oppose racist, sexist and class oppression in today's world.

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At the secondary level the Free School program option is available as well as the flexible Marshall-University High School array of courses and activities. At Marshall-University High School each student with his parents' consent designs his or her educational program within a trimester system of twelve week courses. In addition to single discipline courses there are multi-disciplinary courses, independent study opportunities, and a variety of off-campus learning programs in the community.

The transitional program for grades 7-8 at Marshall-University High School has been revised to offer choices to students coming from the elementary options. An ungraded Open Classroom and graded classes are available as well as A.L.E., the Adjusted Learning Environment for students with special needs. Teachers work in teams to offer a flexible program to meet the needs of students in the transitional years.

A Teacher Center has been established to provide teachers with an opportunity to receive substantial inservice training as well as to provide an avenue for preservice experiences. An Inservice Committee made up of teachers from the schools receives proposals and acts on them, thus providing a direct role for teachers in the staff development activities. The University of Minnesota and Minneapolis Public Schools jointly operate the Teacher Center which was first initiated with federal SEA funds.

Evaluation of the SEA project is both internal and external. The Level I internal evaluation team provides day-to-day responsive formative evaluation to program decision-makers including parents, administrators, faculty, staff and students.

The Level II Evaluation team is organized by the ARIES Corporation. This external team is known as the Minneapolis Evaluation Team (MET) and is accountable directly to N.I.E. The purpose of external evaluation is to independently collect information of a summative nature about SEA which will be of use to practicing educators who are in the process of designing, implementing or operating programs to improve education.

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INTRODUCTION

Though this report was meant to consist entirely of hard data arranged in useful form, the need to record historically what goes on in a highly complex and innovative program has led to the inclusion of much material that is more documentary than evaluative. In order that the report be as accurate as possible under these circumstances, parts of it have been reviewed by persons most likely to be informed about the issues covered. Responses to these reviewed sections that were received by the evaluator are appended to the final version of the report.

Methods used for collecting data include formal and informal observation, formal and informal interviews, and inspection of records. In the case of language arts, some test data was collected by the evaluator although most was collected by staff. Recommendations included in this report were obtained from sources who had some degree of special knowledge and considerable exposure to the school. The recommendations have generally been given to relevant decision-makers prior to being included in this report and are published herein as a matter of record.

Responses to this report are solicited from all readers. Since evaluation reports remain one of the very few sources of information about the Free School program, they should serve as many needs as are consistent with the best interests of the school, its students and its community.

This section of the report is a synthesis of interviews with last year's internal evaluator, Mark Nordell; the former manager of the internal evaluation team, Dale LaFrenz; four parents of Free School students; and the present evaluator's observations during the three years of the Free School's existence.

In the first year of the "problem, how?" (intern I) evaluation faced the tasks of establishing a common evaluation, defining what the evaluation served as an internal program, and defining the role evaluation would play in reporting to the public on the city, Minneapolis school administration, the school board and the National League for Freedom (NLF). The Free School faced the task of becoming a school that would be open to evaluation and an evaluator capable of evaluating the program in that direction.

Early in the first year the Level I evaluation team met with parents, students and staff of the Free School and with the Level II evaluation team in a series of joint-setting meetings and discussions about city-wide testing and the kind of evaluator the Free School needed.

During that year Level I evaluation provided some non-evaluation services in the search for better relations with the Free School. For example, a student from Carleton College taught math at the Free School for college credit through the efforts of Dale LaFrenz, the internal evaluation manager. Dale also arranged for a computer terminal to be installed at the Free School and taught students how to use it.

A further service and compromise solution to the problem of an evaluator for the Free School was the hiring of Mark Nordell to work in the school full time. Mark found the school without systems for recordkeeping, student assessment, communication, conflict resolution or governance. He set up and became coordinator of systems for interstaff reporting on students, some definition of which staff would work with which students, interaction feedback to staff and students, staff evaluation and rehiring decisions. He helped set up the

Governing Board and designed the program for the following year.

For the second year of the Free School a director was hired to replace the head teacher and a better climate for evaluation resulted from his willingness to see evaluation as a valuable service. An agreement between Dale, Mark and the new director, Tony Morley, established what was and was not suitable use of an evaluator's time. However, the role Mark had played the previous year carried over and he continued to play an active role in the development of the school and its daily functioning.

The fall of 1972, the second year of the project, was a tense time at Free School. The enrollment had just been increased to 170 from 70 of the previous year. Some students brought a good deal of hostility into the school, and both new and old staff needed help in dealing with it. Mark dealt with conflicts and recommended hiring a counselor.

As the year went on Mark took an active part in staff evaluation, staff development, curriculum development and development of recordkeeping. He brought in math consultants, set-up workshops in language arts and hired the present Free School evaluator as a part-time assistant to gather skill level data in math and language arts.

He helped the personnel committee establish a process for collecting and processing data for rehiring decisions and helped establish criteria for hiring new staff members.

Mark was generally perceived as a staff member. Other staff saw him as supportive and as someone to go to for help of various kinds. He was seen by parents as a source of valid information about the school and an influential member of the staff who was receptive to ideas and comments from parents. During this time he was also under pressure from Level I evaluation, which was under pressure from the Minneapolis Public Schools administration, to produce hard data on student skills. These conflicting pressures led to his decision to relinquish his role as evaluator at the end of year two.

During the course of the year a position was hired, a detailed evaluation plan written and the job of evaluator was filled. The general functions of the new job definition were that evaluation, evaluation framework, methods and techniques in the collection of data and how on the permeability and intervention into school procedures of the evaluator. Since the job of evaluator would be phased out with the end of federal money in 1976, the evaluator would be responsible for the continuation and presentation of the evaluation plan to carry on necessary evaluation tasks after federal funding ended.

When the new Governing Board was elected and functioning in the fall of 1973 an agreement was reached that reports from internal evaluation about the Free School would be published and disseminated at the discretion of the Level I evaluation team.

The scope of the evaluation plan for 1973-74 was too broad for careful documentation of all its parts and many pernicious impressions are to be found in this report. Next year's evaluation plan is narrower and the ultimate goal is thorough documentation.

Problems of evaluation at the Free School that remain are:

1. How can data be effectively fed into the decision-making process? The section in this report on the Governing Board will illustrate this difficulty.
2. How can data that is most wanted by outside sources be made to reflect the unique qualities of the Free School?
3. How can the need for continuing evaluation of a still-new and developing program be met by the staff without the help of a full-time evaluator after federal funding ends?

THE STUDENT BODY

The following pages show some characteristics of Free School students.

Information was gathered from cumulative records, emergency cards and parent questionnaires. Records are available on 157 students although they are not complete in any category. Not all the students studied were attending the Free School in March when this data was compiled and none of the students who entered after Christmas have been included.

Enrollment and Attendance Records 157 students

	#	%
Entered Free School in first year	34	22.4
Entered second year	55	42.8
Entered third year	53	34.9
Currently attending	133	87.5
Not currently attending	19	12.5
Entry or leaving dates not available	5	3.2

Frontal distribution of Entry Date and Time Attended

Entered Year	How Attended					Total
	1 yr.	2 yr.	3 yr.	4 yr.	5 yr.	
1	0	1	1	4	25	34
2	0	1	2	10	0	63
3	50	0	0	0	0	50
Total	50	3	3	14	25	157

The marked figures represent students who have stayed in the Free School since they entered. Of the approximately 70 students who entered the Free School in its first year, 25 have remained the full time, nine have left and returned. Of the 157 students who have records from the first of the year, 19 or 12.5% left by March.

Family status, income and education levels are shown on the next table. Following this table will be two additional tables comparing family status and education levels of Free School parents with the same characteristics of parents from each of the other SEA schools. Of 141 Free

School students whose records show family status data, 34.8% live with both parents, 61.7% live with the mother only, 1.4% live with the father only and 2.1% live with friends, relatives or legal guardians. Predictably, the major portion of income levels below \$5,000 per year are in single parent families. In the cases of nine single parent families whose income is between \$10,000 and \$20,000, the father is reported as still involved in decisions affecting the students. These figures are probably relevant to the many time commitments expected of Free School parents in the volunteer program and the Governing Board.

Data was requested on family size and position of the student in the family to determine if, where only one child from a family attends the Free School, that child is likely to be a first child or a youngest child. There is not a clear pattern. While 44.4% of 153 students are the only member of the family attending Free School and only 7.9% of 140 are only children, the number of children who are both the only member of the family attending Free School and the oldest child in the family is not clearly significant from these figures.

The number of first children (37.7% of 130 students) listed in the following pages is not divided to indicate which students are from families having two or more children in the Free School, which have siblings too young to attend school and which have school-age siblings attending other schools. No theory that the Free School attracts students with special needs related to their position in the family can be supported by this data.

All of the information about student and parent characteristics is relevant to continuing questions about what kinds of children attend the Free School and why parents send their children to the Free School. The number of families with two or more students at the Free School may indicate dedication to a certain philosophy of education. Where there is only one child from a family at the Free School one might assume the parents were seeking a special environment for a special child.

RELATIONSHIP OF EDUCATION LEVEL TO FAMILY INCOME

Figures indicate numbers of students
rather than number of families.

(total number of students in study - 157)

Students living with mother only
(information on 141 students
87 live with mother only)

Students living with both parents
(information on 141 students live with both parents)

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Total Income for Free School Families

data available for 92 students

	%
less than \$5,000	33.7
\$5,000 - 10,000	23.9
\$10,000 - 20,000	30.4
\$20,000 - 30,000	10.9
\$30,000 - 40,000	0
over \$40,000	1.1

Family Size and Students at Free School

# children in family (tot. data 140)	# children at Free School (tot. data 153)	Position of student in family (tot. data 130)
---	--	--

	%	%	%	
1	7.9	44.4	1st	37.7
2	25.0	32.0	2nd	23.8
3	20.7	11.8	3rd	14.6
4	16.4	5.2	4th	12.3
5	13.6	6.5	5th	6.9
6	7.9	0	6th	2.3
7	4.3	0	7th	2.3
8	3.6	0	8th	0
9	.7	0	9th	0

Comparison of Number of Parents in Home by SEA School¹

	Marcy	Tuttle	Pratt/Motley	Free School
1 Parent	32%	12%	35%	63%
2 Parents	67%	87%	65%	35%

¹ Data for Marcy, Tuttle and Pratt/Motley found in SEA Study of Student Characteristics and Movement (Rawitsch). Data is for end of 1972-73 school year. Data for Free School was collected by internal evaluator during 1973-74 school year.

Comparison of Educational Level of Parents by SEA School²

	<u>MUHS</u>		<u>Tuttle</u>		<u>P/M</u>		<u>Marcy</u>		<u>F.S.</u>		<u>Total SEA</u>	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Some high school or less	14%	7%	10%	7%	5%	4%	7%	3%	2%	2%	10%	5%
Finished high school	12%	22%	26%	35%	5%	12%	4%	9%	6%	4%	10%	16%
Some schooling after H. S.:												
voc. training or college	24%	34%	26%	38%	21%	35%	18%	38%	10%	42%	21%	36%
Four year college graduate	7%	9%	8%	4%	7%	11%	11%	13%	12%	10%	10%	11%
Some graduate work	9%	12%	7%	5%	11%	17%	4%	15%	10%	22%	8%	13%
Graduate degree	27%	31%	32%	6%	43%	18%	40%	22%	46%	20%	33%	15%
No response	7%	3%	10%	6%	9%	3%	7%	2%	14%	-	9%	4%

F = Father
M = Mother

² Data from 1974 SEA Parent Opinion Survey Report (Almen).

NEEDS IDENTIFICATION

This study was designed to help identify the kinds of needs students bring to the Free School and to determine which needs the Free School is most successful in meeting. The study of success in meeting needs was intended to continue for three years.

The study includes the behavior follow-up of four students with special and severe problems. Two of these students were very disruptive and both have since transferred. The other two were withdrawn and unresponsive. Both of the latter remain in the Free School--no clearly visible changes have occurred in their behavior. In the mid-year report the internal evaluator reported that the needs of the disruptive students posed problems of time and slight return on effort that indicated the school ought not to accept such students without thoughtful provisions designed to lead to more success and less drain on the staff and other students. No recommendation was made about the students who were withdrawn.

A report of students with special needs in reading and math will be presented in the section of the report on language arts and math.

This section of the report will include the results of a parent questionnaire, some information from cumulative records of students, two case students and some observations from people who have special expertise and/or exposure to the school.

The parent questionnaire included the question, "Is there some "most important" need the Free School should meet for your child? If so, what is it?" The question was intended to identify needs which other schools could not or had not met. If the Free School were successful in meeting those needs that success would mark part of the difference between Free School and other schools.

The list on the next page has been abstracted from sentence and paragraph answers. Many parents listed several needs.

Needs Listed by Parents in Fall, 1973.

0 represents parent of primary students

1 parent of middle student

X parent of secondary student

A. Needs related to self-determinism of the child:	
to learn to choose and achieve goals	00111XXXX
to develop creativity	011
to obtain the skills needed to achieve goals	0011X
to allow self-scheduling by impulse with as much time as desired on each activity	0111XX
to achieve development as an individual, become independent	1111XX
B. Needs related to a positive self-image: (these included self-confidence, self-awareness, self-understanding and a tolerance for one's personal limitations)	00001111XXXX
C. Needs related to a positive attitude toward learning: (these included enjoyment of learning, development of motivation, stimulation of interest and curiosity)	000000000111XXXX
learning how to learn, not just facts	0111
presentation of a more varied curriculum with more and better activities than a traditional school would offer	0001
D. Social skills:	
sense of responsibility to others	0X
tolerance	0000000011
skills necessary for living in this society	
basic skills plus mechanics, sewing, woodworking and child care, etc.	00000X1
learn to cope with and change society	00
be comfortable with peers	X0
learn cooperation instead of competition	001
E. Values of the Free School: (these include non-sexist, non-racist teaching, and correspondence to the parent's life style)	
treating children with respect, like people	00
0	
F. Parental convenience	0
G. Free School should provide a transition to a traditional school	1

Most of the needs listed fall into the area of affective learning-- responsibility, setting and achieving goals, development of a positive self-image, development of a positive attitude toward learning and learning how to get along with others. The list needs to be prioritized and operationalized before extensive work can be done to determine success in meeting those needs.

Other needs become apparent in staff meetings as students are discussed. Some of these can be studied further with helpful results. Staff comments about the large proportion of academically skilled women in the secondary area and the effects in large classes led to an examination of cum records which revealed the following pattern:

WOMEN		%ile	MEN	
Verbal	Math/non-verb.		Verbal	Math/non-verb.
11	11	95 +	11	1
11111 111		85-94		11
1	11	75-84	111	11111
1	1111	65-74	11111	11
111	11	55-64	1	1
1	11	45-54	1	1111
1	111	35-44	1111	
1111	11	25-34	11	11
1	1111	15-24	11	11
1	1	5-14	1	11
1	1	-5	11	1
24	23	TOTAL	23	22

It becomes clear that the situation that occurred (verbally skilled women presenting too great a challenge for men whose self-confidence was already low) was predictable. An early examination of records and planning to deal with these kinds of differences might prevent such problems in the future.

Another tally was undertaken because of frequent remarks, in and out of the school, that problem students go to the Free School or are sent to the Free School when their home schools are not able to deal with them. A study of the cum records of 152 students shows the following past histories. No student was tallied more than once in the first seven categories. I.Q. test information overlaps with the other categories.

	<u>Secondary Students</u>	<u>Middle Students</u>
Referred for Social Service	11111	11
Referred more than once	11111	
Referred for psychol. testing	11111 1	
Referred more than once	1	-----13%
Referred for treatment	111	111
		-----3.9%
Hospitalized for Psych. reasons	11	
Hospitalized more than once	1	-----1.9%
Tested or reported as retarded or "very low mental ability"	11	-----1.3%
Tested in the 99th percentile on I.Q. tests	1	11 -----1.9%

Reasons for referring a student for testing vary a great deal and some may have been classroom related, as with students who "have a short attention span", but the total numbers do help describe the Free School. Other needs are known to exist but are not countable in this way. Several students who had been in trouble with the law repeatedly have left the Free School, transferring to other schools or leaving school as they passed compulsory age. Some secondary students have problems related to drug abuse, but no precise information is available.

A study of Free School's success in meeting the many and varied needs of its students is staggering to contemplate. To collect data on languaging arts and math and to compile lists this year of existing needs has constituted a full-time job for the evaluator.

On the other hand, the Free School has access to observers who are connected with the school in a variety of ways: teachers funded for single courses under contracted services, volunteers, consultants and student support personnel from the Minneapolis Public School System and visitors. These observers form a unique fund of "evaluation" of the environment and the way students function in it. Much of this information is neglected, given out confidentially to a few

people, discussed in larger staff meetings or at the Governing Board. To report from that kind of data bank has weaknesses such as imprecision and the possibility of biased selection. To partially counter that last problem, the following comments have been released to staff and feedback is invited and will be appended to this report.

Sections on language arts and math in this report carry some evidence that turned-off students do get turned-on again to academic subjects. Students whose special need is release from academic competition can get it at the Free School. Observers have been heard to comment on the individualized program which allows students to compete against their own early performance. Individual attention is available--observers have commented on the amount of knowledge about each student that the teachers have. Students' self-images can change, especially those students who have become accustomed to thinking of themselves as the bottom of the class. Students' relationships with teachers can be warm and personal--first names are used and teachers relate to students for the most part as individuals and fellow humans.

In order for the school to build on these successes and expand them, as they need to be expanded to reach more students more effectively, some problems need to be delineated. Some of those problems have been reported by observers in the school.

Many secondary students have skill deficiencies they are reluctant to admit to. Others have problems with drug abuse and skirt trouble with the law. Secondary staff are not in agreement about dealing with these problems.

Secondary staff are not in agreement about records for their students. A comparison of attendance reports with occasional counts of secondary students in the building at any given time indicate that the attendance reports are highly impressionistic where observers feel scrupulous accuracy might serve the student's interests better. Staff cannot reach an agreement about crediting a student's cum record--some give credit to students who rarely attend while others feel that practice might mask a student's real needs if those records are sent to another

school.

The following set of recommendations have been supplied by observers of the secondary program:

1. If the school wants to provide a year-off school for a student, and that may be a legitimate and needed service, it should be honest about that offer and involve the student and the parent in the decision about whether that is what the student needs.
2. Secondary staff should make better use of available resources to counsel students.
3. Staff should realign some priorities to allow more time for staff to
 - a) counsel students, b) obtain additional training in counseling students, and c) give close one-one instruction where it will be the most effective.
 - A. More students could be referred to classes at the University, Urban Arts, MUHS, and other places. This would provide students with more choices and staff with more time to find out who has dropped out and why, or to work on skill development with students who need it.
 - B. Team teaching could be reduced in some places without damaging effectiveness--for example a music course consisted of one volunteer, four staff people, and four students with some variation in the number of students attending. Films shown in the secondary area seem often to be attended by equal numbers of staff and students. A karate course offered under contracted services was attended by about equal numbers of staff and students.
4. Student cum records could be consulted before school starts and some plans made to deal with such problems as the imbalance of skills among students.
5. Expectations for a student's performance could be made clear before school starts and consequences of not meeting expectations established and agreed upon. While this might not be profitable for new students making a transition from another school, it is possible for students who are here now and plan to come back next year.

The statistics in the student body section of this report do not show non-white enrollment because that data is available only from sight-counts and they do not distinguish, for example, between black students of black parents and black students with white mothers. Those two groups may both be listed as black students, but they do not always have identical needs. The following remarks about the needs of black students come from black parents and from comments made by several black women who have worked in the school for varying

amounts of time from two weeks to two years.

A concern expressed about black students with white mothers is that they have a need to understand and be proud of their black identity and that understanding has not been provided them. Naturally this burden cannot fall completely on the school.

There is consensus from the above sources that black students need a strong basic skills program and the kind of businesslike approach to the world that will help them make their way against heavy odds. There is also considerable concern from black parents that their children have a realistic assessment of what the world offers them as blacks--concern expressed especially in regard to the Free School's tolerance of abusive language from students. That tolerance is said to be all very well for white kids but likely to lead black students into false expectations. In the world at large black children will not be allowed to use abusive language and the consequences will fall especially heavily on them.

An assumption long held about the needs of black students is that they need to have black teachers in the school. For various reasons all three black women working in the school at the present time will leave at the end of this year.

During the course of this year the Free School lost by transfer five black students from the primary area--all were black students with black parents. Two of the six black students from the middle area will not return next year and they are black children of black parents, while those remaining are black children with white mothers.

These statistics are especially poignant in the light of the Free School's often declared dedication to make this a Free School that could serve the needs of all students.

Case History I

This student was listed as a notable Free School success by three of the six staff members who responded to a request for lists of Free School successes and failures. A secondary student, he attends the Free School on a principal's agreement from outside this attendance area. He is fourteen years old, the seventh in a family of eight children, and lives with both parents. He entered Free School in the fall of 1972.

His cumulative record indicates that he was referred for social services work in 1966, 1969, and 1970. He was listed as aggressive, resistant to authority and borderline retarded. Attendance was a serious problem.

In his first year at the Free School attendance and aggressiveness remained a problem. His reading test indicated skills at about fourth grade level. He showed some brief interest in reading adventure books at that level after being assured that with that level of skills he could read but needed practice.

The second year started much like the first with attendance up some. Comments through the year indicated changes in behavior and attitude and in April three staff members were asked to fill out an assessment form without consulting each other. All agreed:

He showed improvement in reading skills and confidence, knowledge of his improvement and pleasure in it.

He demonstrated interest in and success at adapting his behavior to the requirements of his situation and increasing flexibility in meeting changes in that situation.

He wants to be at school, and is becoming involved in school activities. Although he is still resistant to math and likes to be coaxed in other classes, he does participate and contribute.

He is more comfortable with his peers, less inclined to be led into negative behavior by peer pressure, less inclined to shove or hit although he still does some, more often sought out by his peers, and is more inclined to cooperate with them in academic subjects although this is still difficult for him.

He has firm and positive relationships with at least three adults in the school, seeks and utilizes their help in academic and social problems. He also seeks adult approval though he is not excessively concerned about it.

He will initiate and complete projects that require more than one day for completion although he is not able to do that readily or with things that are not immediately rewarding to him. He does show pleasure and pride in a product when he completes it.

He is less easily frustrated, most tolerant of his own difficulties in large motor tasks, but more and more tolerant of difficulties with small motor tasks, paper and pencil tasks, grasping new information and having other people's responses not meet his expectations.

All three agree that his academic skills are short of what he needs and that he is not self-sufficient in ways he needs to be.

Case History II

This student has been at the Free School for three years and was often mentioned as a notable Free School success during the first two years. She was not listed by any of the six staff members who responded to the request for lists of successes and failures. A secondary student, she is fifteen years old and lives with both parents. Information on her family is not complete but she is a younger child in a fairly large family.

Her cumulative record shows a steady downhill line on standardized tests from percentiles in the 70's in first grade to lowest fifth percentile in the fifth grade. At this time teacher comments begin to indicate low ability. At the Free School she has steadfastly refused testing of her reading skills.

Three staff people were asked to fill out assessment forms for this student and they all agree:

She is selective about learning situations she is willing to get involved in, will work and achieve only where she wants to.

She is self-sufficient in maintaining herself--earning money for clothes, getting to school by herself, and riding buses wherever she wants to go. She is not self-sufficient in attending to her educational needs by going to classes.

She is slowly becoming more trusting and able to communicate her wants and needs to others.

She is sometimes actively sought out by her peers, sometimes generous and considerate of them, mostly very independent and inclined to interact with peers only on her terms and according to her mood, and is occasionally verbally abusive but not physically abusive to her peers.

She has a positive relationship with at least one adult in the school. Though she is not consistent in seeking adult help with academic, social or emotional problems, she seeks adult approval and is sometimes excessively concerned about it.

Her attention span varies according to her interest in the subject and her tolerance for any sort of failure or frustration is very low.

She requires urging to start and complete projects that take more than one day to complete, and usually does not gain much pleasure from finished products.

She is not very flexible in moving from task to task or trying new materials.

Additional case histories need to be done if they are to be of any value but several tasks need to be done first. A workshop is planned to discuss "success" and "failure" in terms of the Free School meeting needs of students. If agreement were reached about what constitutes success and failure, then data could be collected that might help multiply success and decrease failure. Problems arise, for example, with students who are thought by parents or professional consultants to be better off at the Free School than they would be anywhere else. This statement is not comforting to staff who see those students growing older without becoming more adept at dealing with the world around them. The school has not yet established its intention to either refer those students elsewhere or hire staff or consultants with special skills to deal with them. There are at least four students presently enrolled at the Free School who fit this description.

MATH

Math is taught in a math resource area, in the science resource area, in the industrial arts resource area, in the primary room and for a short time was taught in the counselor's office by the counselor. The math resource area is equipped with a computer terminal, games, ranging from Yahtzee to Chinese checkers, manipulative devices like geotaxis and blocks and puzzles, materials such as text books and workbooks and a large supply of worksheets devised by the math teacher. During the course of the year some "magnet" projects occur in math which spread out of the math room and occupy the minds of students to such an extent that they talk about them to other students and to any available adults. One of these is the offer of \$50.00 to any student who can count to a million. No assurance by the math teacher or anyone else that this is impossible keeps students from working on it. Another is a chess tournament, still another is a game called "the financial life game."

In the financial life game a student is given an imaginary \$3000.00 and dropped into Minneapolis to make his or her way. Dossiers are compiled by the students with education and last-job-held information and jobs are selected from the want-ads. Housing must be found and correctly budgeted to cover utilities, bank accounts are opened, checks written, loans applied for, and chance cards drawn which provide such things as hospital bills and marriage plans. The game has run at a high pitch for one full week as of this writing and students go all over the school to find newspapers, phone books and a place to work after their scheduled time in the math room is over.

Records in the math room are highly detailed and complete. Most of the information in the following pages of this math section comes from those records. Records in shop and science are less detailed and the problem of conveying skill level information from shop or science to the math teacher or a student's advisor has not yet been solved.

In October, 1973 two students from the middle age level volunteered the information that they intended to work on math this year. The following are brief sketches of their work last year and this year in the math room along with some other information about them. The students listed as 3, 4, and 5 are students who were recognized last year as needing a great deal more work in math but who were not heard to declare their intention to seek it.

1. Male. Birthdate 5-13-60. Entered Free School in Sept. 1972. Highly verbal, very skilled reader, he says he "can't do long division" and has a detailed explanation of why. Last year he spent a total of 15½ hours in the math room, mostly on games. As of May 1, 1974 he has spent 32 hours in the math room on games, computer, decimals and fractions. He also helped a younger student with multiplication. The time spent by him in the math room on any one day ranged from 10 minutes to 2½ hours. He also does some math in the science room with projects that require measuring.
2. Female. Birthdate 11-29-63. Entered Free School Sept. 1972. She is very interested in theatre and reads well above grade level. She doesn't like math much. Last year she spent a total of 23 hours in the math room, almost all of it spent on games, mazes and drawing. As of May 1st of this year she has spent a total of 38 hours in the math room on multiplication, division, review of subtraction, computer, and helping an older student. The time spent by her in the math room on any one day ranges from 10 minutes to one hour.
3. Male. Birthdate 8-20-62. Entered Free School mid-year 71/72. He is a skilled reader and draws a great deal. No math record exists for him from last year, which means he did not go into the math room at all. As of May 1, 1974 he had spent a total of 14 hours in the math room working on the computer, doing additions and subtraction, playing games and working mazes, in that order of frequency.
4. Female. Birthdate 2-16-62. Entered Free School Sept. 1972. She reads below grade level. Last year she spent a total of three hours in the math room. Each time she was making change with fake money. As of May 1, 1974 she had spent 14 hours total time working on subtraction, addition, multiplication tables and computer games. Her time in the math room ranges from 5-45 minutes.
5. Male. Birthdate 4-2-62. Entered Free School in Sept. 1972. He is a very skilled reader but does not like paper or pencil tasks. Last year he spent a total of 11 hours in the math room working on a variety of things: games, drawing, puzzles, some addition and subtraction. This year he has spent a total of 23 hours in the math room drawing, building, subtracting and using the computer, maps and games. He did some work sheets at home on fractions.

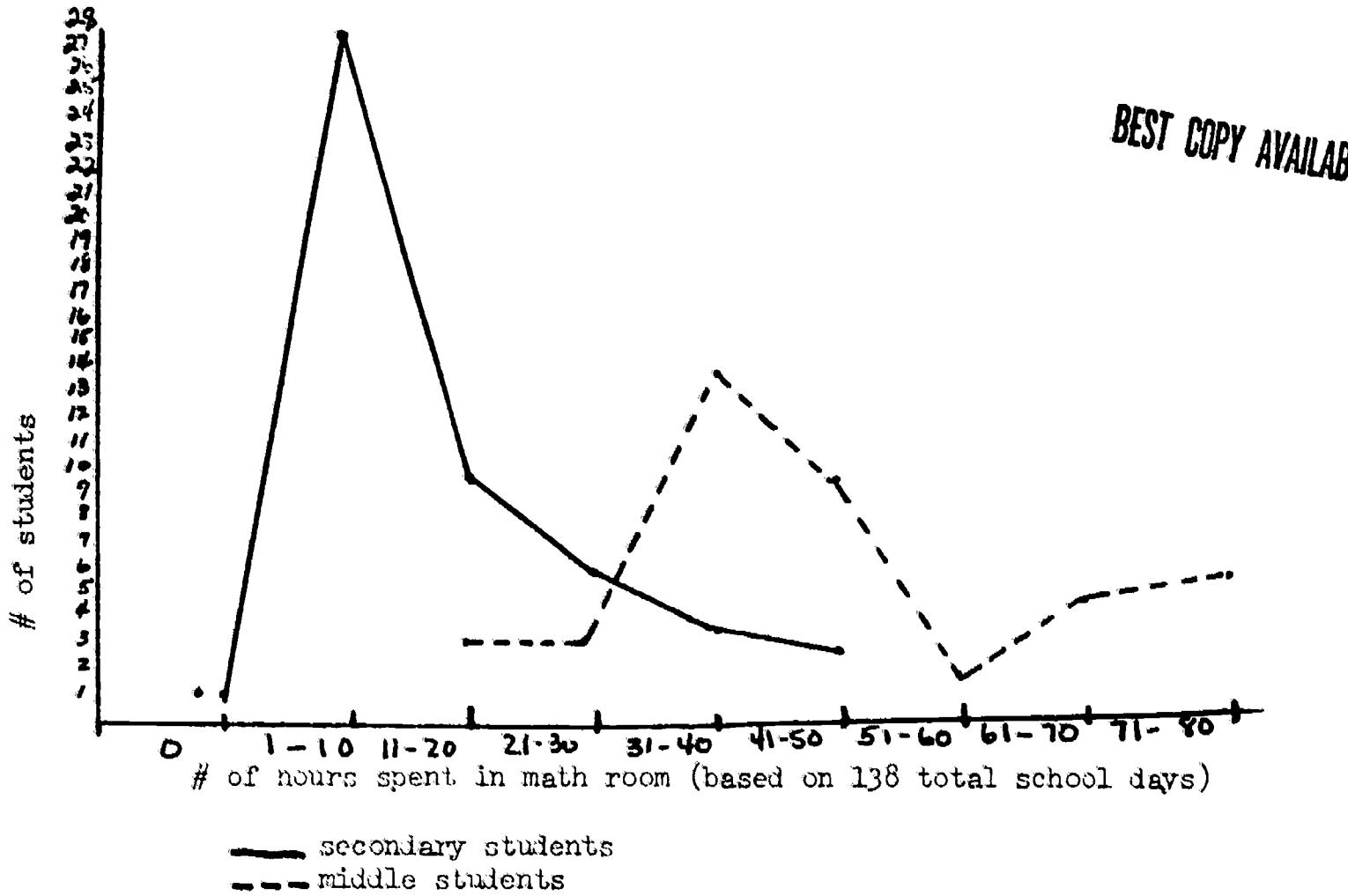
These are selected cases of students who entered Free School with some expressed dislike for math. Further examination of use of the math room will indicate the degree of success of the math program in reaching all students.

This year's math records are done in three periods. The first and second cover about 55 school days each, and the third has run for 28 days as of this writing. The following are the average number of hours spent in the math room per student for each of those periods and for secondary and middle students.

<u>SECONDARY STUDENTS</u>		
<u>1st period</u>	<u>2nd period</u>	<u>3rd period</u>
55 school days	55 school days	28 school days
52 students	52 students	59 students
Average total hours per student	Average total hours per student	Average total hours per student
7.3	4.5	1.7

<u>MIDDLE STUDENTS</u>		
<u>1st period</u>	<u>2nd period</u>	<u>3rd period</u>
55 school days	55 school days	28 school days
43 students	44 students	44 students
Average total hours per student	Average total hours per student	Average total hours per student
18.5	18.7	9.8

TIME SPENT IN MATH ROOM BY MIDDLE AND SECONDARY STUDENTS



A study of the use of the math room shows that, while middle students use the math room consistently for an average of around 19 hours per 55 day period, the use for secondary students has been very low and has declined from the beginning of the year. An examination of the skills tally indicates that many of the secondary students can only demonstrate familiarity and not mastery of basic whole number and fraction skills. The major motivation for secondary students to pick up skills they lack has been, this year and last, the graduation requirements. The kind of turn-ons that occur with middle students do not happen with secondary students, and math-haters do not become math-lovers.

MATH SKILLS RECORD OF MIDDLE
AND SECONDARY STUDENTS
(AS OF APRIL '74)

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	Age 9-10	Age 11-12	Age 13-14	Age 15-16	Age 17-18	Mastery	
						Familiarity N=13	Mastery N=17
1. WHOLE NUMBER OPERATIONS							
A. Addition	14	13	13	14	14	14	8
B. Subtraction	5	12	12	14	14	12	8
C. Multiplication	4	8	4	4	11	12	6
D. Division	5	4	2	4	9	9	6
2. FRACTION OPERATIONS							
A. Addition	2	2	4	2	2	2	8
B. Subtraction	1	1	4	3	11	11	6
C. Multiplication	1	1	2	3	7	7	6
D. Division	1	2	1	2	4	7	5
E. Simplifying	1	3	7	7	4	6	4
3. DECIMAL OPERATIONS							
A. Addition		1		4	12	7	7
B. Subtraction		1		4	11	6	6
C. Multiplication		1		4	9	7	6
D. Division		1		4	7	7	3
E. Converting		1	3	6	2	3	3
4. SQUARES AND SQUARE ROOTS							
A. x^2		1		1	1	9	6
B. Find $\sqrt{\quad}$ of a perfect square		1		3	9	9	5
C. Simplifying radicals		1		3	3	3	4
D. Find the approximate $\sqrt{\quad}$ of a non-perfect square		1	1	2	1	3	2
E. Find $\sqrt{\quad}$ using a table		1	1	2	1	3	2
5. MEASUREMENT							
A. Use of yardstick or ruler meter stick		4		8	8	8	5
B. Conversion of units:		2		1	2	5	4
1. distance		1		1	7	6	3
2. money	4	12		6	10	5	4
3. time	4	11		6	3	4	3
4. weight	1	2		2	1	4	2
5. liquid measure	1	7		5	1	3	1
6. metric-metric	4	1		4	1	3	1
7. English-metric	4				1	3	1
6. BASIC GEOMETRIC CONCEPTS							
A. Vertical & horizontal lines		2		6	6	11	7
B. Parallel & intersecting lines	1	1		5	5	12	6
C. Perpendicular lines		1		3	7	5	6
D. Rectangle, square, triangle and circle		5		17	2	13	7
E. Find length of one side of a right triangle by using Pythagorean theory				1	8	3	3
7. RATIO-PROPORTION							
A. Set up a proportion to solve a given problem		1		4	1	4	4
B. Solve a proportion for unknown		1		5	1	5	3
8. PERCENT							
A. Find $x\%$ of a given number		1		2	1	1	3
B. x is what % of y		1	3	2	2	5	3
C. Conversion: decimal-percent fraction-percent		1	5	30	2	4	3

MATH SKILLS RECORD OF MIDDLE
AND SECONDARY STUDENTS

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	Familiarity N-13	Age 9-10	Mastery	Age 11-12		Familiarity N-17	Age 13-14	Age 15-16		Familiarity N-14	Age 17-18	Mastery N-8
				Master	Mastery			Master	Mastery			
9. PERIMETER, AREA, VOLUME				1	9	1	2	3	6		5	
A. Find the perimeter of a plane figure (sides are line segments)				1	2			1	5		3	
B. Find the area of: triangle consistent width figure composite figure				1	2		2	2	3		2	
C. Find the vol. of a rect. solid					1				3		3	
D. Find the vol. of a solid figure given the formula					1			1	2		2	
E. Circles: given the radius, find the area					1				2		2	
given the radius, find the circumference					1				2		2	
10. ANGLES				1	1	1	3	2	3	9	3	
A. Measure with protractor an angle of 0-180 degrees				1	2	2	4	1	2	8	4	
B. Construct angle of 0-180 deg.				1	1	2	2	2	3	6	5	
C. Know the sum of angles in a square, rectangle, triangle					1	2	4	4	4	10	4	
D. Know the sum of angles around a point (degrees in a circle)						4		4		1	3	
E. Draw and identify vertical angles										1	5	
F. Complementary and supplementary angles: given the measure of an angle, find the complement and draw the situation										1	5	
given the measure of an angle, find the measure of its supplement and draw the situation										1	5	
11. SIMILAR AND CONGRUENT TRIANGLES				1	2	5	1	3	1	10	6	
A. Identify two triangles as similar or not similar				1	3					1	4	
B. Given two similar triangles and the lengths of five sides, find the missing measure				1	3					1	2	
C. Identify two triangles or other figures as congruent or not				1	3					4	4	
12. MAPS				1	1	2	1			2	2	
Find the linear distance in miles between any two points on road map												
13. STATISTICS												
A. Organize data into a frequency distribution or table						1		1		4	1	4
B. Find the mean, mode and median										2	1	2
C. Interpret line and bar graphs	2		8		4	5		2		5	1	7
D. Construct line and bar graphs	1		4		1	5		7		3	1	4
E. Determine if a sample is random		Some-times	Most-ly					2		1		3
14. SOME PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS												
A. Makes intelligent guesses	8		4	3	7	3	3	2	4		2	
B. Asks for hints, not answers	9		1	6	2	4	1	1	2		2	
C. Organizes ideas in sketches, tables, lists, etc.	1									2		
D. Makes reasonable generalizations										3		
E. Formulates hypothesis										2		
F. Tests hypothesis										2		

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Primary Math

Although a few primary students go to the math room, most primary math is taught in the primary room. Students do measuring in shop and cooking and for its own sake. They also do worksheets and play math-related games.

In April, 1974 the primary staff completed math grids on all primary students. A tally of the skills recorded on those grids follows.

PRIMARY MATH SKILLS RECORD

O-no

1-partially

X-yes

Numbers and Numberation	Age 5 N=5	Age 6 N=6	Age 7 N=11	Age 8 N=11
1. Sorts collection of things into sets	XXXXX	XXX XXXXX	X XXXXX XXXXX	XXXX XXXXX
2. Forwards 1-1 correspondences	XXXXX	XXX XXXXX	X XXXXX XXXXX	XXX XXXXX
3. Understands more, less, just as much	XXXXX	XXX XXXXX	X XXXXX XXXXX	XXX XXXXX
4. Orders collection of objects by size	XXXXX	XXX XXXXX	X XXXXX XXXXX	XXXX XXXXX
5. Forwards number property of sets (1-10)	XXXXX	XXX XXXXX	X XXXXX XXXXX	XXXX XXXXX
6. Sorts with understanding to 10	XXXXX	XXX XXXXX	X XXXXX XXXXX	XXXX XXXXX
7. Develops bunch of objects >10 into subsets of a given number	11 XXX	1 XX XXXXX	X XXXXX XXXXX	XXXX XXXXX
8. Understands groupings in tens and ones for numbers 10-50	11 XX	0 11 XXXXX	1 XXXXX XXXXX	XXXX XXXXX
9. Forwards number names & order for numbers <50	1 XXXX	1 XX XXXXX	X XXXXX XXXXX	XXXX XXXXX
10. Understands ordinal numbers: first to tenth	1 XXXX	1 XX XXXXX	X XXXXX XXXXX	XXXX XXXXX
Addition and Subtraction				
1. Understands meaning of addition	11 XXX	XXX XXXXX	X XXXXX XXXXX	XXXX XXXXX
2. Develops basic addition facts to sum of 10	11 XXX	111 XXXXX	11 XXXX XXXXX	XXXX XXXXX
3. Understands meaning of subtraction	0 11 XX	00 1111 X	1111 XX XXXXX	XXXX XXXXX
4. Develops basic subtraction facts, minuends to 10	00 1 XX	000 1111 X	00 11 XX XXXXX	XXXX XXXXX
5. Develops basic addition facts to sum of 18	00 11 X	00000 1 XX	00 11 XX XXXXX	XXXX XXXXX
6. Develops basic subtraction facts, minuends to 18	000 1 X	0 00000 1 X	0000 XX XXXXX	XXXX XXXXX
7. Solves practical problems; addition with two addends, sums to 99 using materials	00 11 X	0000 11 XX	00 1111 111 X	11 11 1111
8. Understands basic add. algorithm	0000 X	0000 11 XX	0000 1111 1 X	1111 1111
9. Solves practical problems: subtraction with minuends <100 , using concrete materials	0000 X	00000 1 XX	00000 0 1111 X	00 0 1111
10. Understands corresponding subtraction algorithm	0000 X	00000 0 11	00000 00 1111	00 00 1111

PRIMARY MATH SKILLS RECORD

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

 0-no
 1-partially
 X-yes

	Age 5 N-5	Age 6 N-6	Age 7 N-7	Age 8 N-8
<u>Addition and Subtraction (cont.)</u>				
11. Solves practical problems; addition with sums to 99.	00000 X	00000 0 11	00000 00 1111	00 1111 XXX
12. Understands carry-over in; algorithm	00000 X	00000 0 11	00000 000 111	00 11111 XX
13. Solves practical problems; subtraction with minuends to 999.	00000 X	00000 00 1	00000 000 111	00 11111 XX
14. Understands carry-over in; algorithm	00000 X	00000 00 1	00000 000 111	00 11111 XX
<u>Multiplication and Division</u>				
1. Counts objects by 2,3,4,5, 10	111 XX	1111 XXX	11111 XXXX X	1 XXXXX XXX
2. Understands concept of multipl.	0000 1	0000 00 1	00000 000 11	0 11111 XXX
3. Develops basic facts to 9x9 concretely	00000	00000 00 1	00000 000 111	0000 111 X
4. Uses distributive principle to make multiplication easier	00000	00000 000	00000 0000 0	00000 000 1
5. Understands standard multiplication algorithm as use of distributive principle	00000	00000 000	00000 0000 0	00000 000 1
<u>Fractions and Numbers</u>				
1. Understands concept of $\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{3}, \frac{1}{4}$ of whole	11111	11111 11 X	11111 111 XXX	111 XXXXX X
2. Understands concept of $\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{3}, \text{etc.}$ of a number of objects	11111	11111 11 X	000 11111 11 X	00 11111 XX
3. Develops word problems; fractional part of various objects	00000	00000 0 1 X	00000 0000 11	000 1111 XX
4. Familiar with symbolic $\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{3}, \text{etc.}$	0 111 X	11111 1 XX	00 11111 11 XX	1111 XXXXX
<u>Linear Measurement</u>				
1. Measures length of objects: 1 over, shorter, twice as long; half as long, same	1 XXXX	XXXXX XXX	XXXXX XXXX X	XXXXX XXXX
2. Finds length of object using non-standard units	1 XXXX	1 XXXXX XX	1 XXXXX XXXXX	XXXXX XXXX
3. Compares length of objects in terms of non-standard unit	11 XXX	1 XXXXX XX	1111 XXXXX XX	XXXXX XXXX
4. Understands concept of perimeter	00 111	0000 111 X	00 11111 111 X	111 XXXXX X
5. Understands need for stand. unit	0 1111	00000 0 1 X	000 11111 111	11 XXXXX X
6. Familiar with centimeter and meter	000 XX	0000 11 XX	00 11111 XXXX	0 111 XXXXX
7. Understands relationships between standard units	0000 1	00000 11 X	0 11111 11111	1111 XXXXX
<u>Area Measurement</u>				
1. Makes designs on flat surface using various shapes	1 XXXX	XXXXX XXX	XXXXXX XXXXX X	XXXXX XXXX
2. Covers a surface with a particular shape, counts number used	11 XXX	111 XXXXX	111 XXXXX XXXXX	XXXXX XXXX
3. Compares number of given shapes used to cover a flat surface	00 111	11111 1 XX	11111 11 XXXX	111 XXXXX X
4. Uses various geometric shapes to cover and compare a. of surfa.	00 111	0 11111 1 X	0 11111 111 XXX	111 XXXXX X

PRIMARY MATH SKILLS RECORD

BEST COPY AVAILABLE
 0-no
 1-primarily
 X-yes

	Age 5 N=5	Age 6 N=8	Age 7 N=11	Age 8 N=9
Capacity or Volume				
1. Understands meaning of more, less, just as much	XXXX	XXXXX XXX	XXXXX XXXXX X	XXXXX XXXX
2. Uses non-standard measure to find capacity of given container	111 XX	00 111 XXX	11111 1 XXXXX	XXXXX XXXX
3. Compares capacity of two or more containers with non-stand. unit	111 XX	000 1111 X	0 11111 11111	111 XXXXX X
4. Understands meaning of stand. units: cup, pint, qt., gal., lit.	00 111	11111 11 X	00 11111 11111	11111 11 XX
5. Understands relationship between standard units	000 11	00 11111 1	00 11111 11	11111 11 XX
6. Measures capacity of containers using standard units	000 11	00000 111	000 11111 111	0 11111 1 XX
Weight				
1. Uses terms such as heavier, lighter, heaviest, lightest, just as heavy	XXXXX	XXXXX XXX	XXXXX XXXXX X	XXXXX XX X
2. Uses balance scale to compare weights of objects	XXX	1 XXXXX	XXXXX XXXXX	1 XXXXX XXX
3. Uses balance scale to weigh objects in non-stand. units	XXX	0 XXXXX	1111 XXXXX X	111 XXX X
4. Compares weights of objects using non-stand. units	1 XX	0 XXXXX	1111 XXXXX X	111 XXX X
Non-Metric Geometry				
1. Recognizes 3-dimensional shapes like boxes, caps, balls and differences between them	XXXXX	1 XXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXX
2. Understands meaning of terms: inside, outside, on, curve, vertical, horizontal	111 XX	1111111 X	11111 XXXXX	111 XXXX X
3. Understands meaning of closed curve, simple curve, polygon	000 11	00000 111	000 1111111 X	1111111 1
4. Recognizes triangles, squares, rectangles, circles	XXXXX	XXXXXXXX	1 XXXXXXXXXXX	1 XXXXXX X
5. Locates 2-dimensional shapes on 3-dimensional objects	11 XXX	00 11111 X	00 111111 XXX	111 XXXX X
6. Understands concept of symmetry about a line	00 111	0 111111 X	1111111111 X	111111 X X
7. Finds symmetrical and asymmetrical patterns	0 111 X	00 11111 X	1111111111 X	1111 XXX X
8. Understands concepts of point, line, segment from examination of solid figures	0000 1	00000 111	00000 11111 X	0 111111 X

PRIMARY MATH SKILLS RECORD

BEST COPY AVAILABLE
 0-no
 1-primarily
 X-yes

Time	Age 5 N=5	Age 6 N=8	Age 7 N=11	Age 8 N=9
1. Understands concepts of before, after, during	XXXXX	XXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXX	1 XXXXXX
2. Uses non-standard measurement of time	1 XXXX	XXXXXXX	XXXXXXX	XXXXXXX
3. Understands terms like today, tomorrow, yesterday, last Sunday, next Tuesday	0 1 XXX	111 XXXX	11 XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXX
4. Knows days of week, months and relationship between them	0 111 X	111111 XX	1111111 XXXX	1 XXXXXXXX
5. Times activities in seconds	000 1 X	000 111 XX	000000 1111 X	1 XXXXXXXX
6. Understands relationship between seconds and minutes	0 111 X	1111111 X	00 1111111 XX	111 XXXXXX
7. Understands relationship between minutes and hours	0 111 X	1111111 X	00 1111111 XX	111 XXXXXX
8. Uses clock to tell time to the hour	000 1 X	00000 XXX	00000 1111 XX	XXXXXXX
9. Uses clock to tell time to the half-hour, etc.	0000 1	000000 1 X	000000 111 X	111 XXXXX

Quantity

1. Uses terms such as many, few, just as many, more, less	XXXXX	XXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXX
2. Groups a given number of objects using a non-standard measure	0 11 XX	0 1111 XXX	0 11 XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXX
3. Understands and uses standard units like dozen, half-dozen	1111 X	000 11111	0 111 XXXXXXX	1 XXXXXXX

LANGUAGE ARTS

Language arts include the skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening and critical thinking. Most of the teachers and most advisors teach language arts in some form. Advisee groups required some study of listening and speaking skills in consideration of group interactions, black history required report writing, current events involved reading and criticizing newspaper articles, math students working on the financial life game produced a newspaper containing want-ads, and in a course about horses taught by the gym teacher, students wrote away for information which they then discussed and wrote reports about. Mapping the course of student progress in skills through all these courses has proven to be difficult, when not impossible.

Student's reading skills are tested at least once a year by means of individuals reading into a tape from graded materials produced by McGrath. While this is not precise and impressively scientific data it does indicate the range of reading skills the student has, the range of material he is able to handle and whether he is able over time to read increasingly difficult material. No priority is given to retesting students once they indicate the ability to read and comprehend material at what McGrath designates as twelfth grade level. Charts on the following pages indicate that six students read below grade level or what their grade would be according to their age. Of these, four have been at the Free School for more than one year.

Closer follow-up was done on seven students who were identified as having problems with reading, five of whom entered the Free School in the fall of 1973. Two have transferred from the Free School to other schools since the mid-year report, and two new students have been added to the study to replace them.

Language Arts follow-up.

Student A. Age 11, entered Free School in Fall, 1972. Is able to read somewhat more difficult material, from McGrath level 3 in Spring, 1973 to level 5 in Spring, 1974. Is still not cooperative or highly motivated.

Student B. Age 10, entered Free School in Fall, 1972. Is able to read somewhat more difficult materials, from McGrath level 1 in Spring, 1973 to level 3 in Spring, 1974. Was unwilling to be heard reading aloud by anyone but his advisor, though read briefly to the internal evaluator in December and to a volunteer at somewhat greater length in Spring. Now reads some for pleasure, primarily joke books.

Student C. A . entered Free School in F. . 1972. Is able to read more difficult material, from McGrath level 4 in Spring, 1973 to level 6 in 1974. Much more confident, says he used to believe he couldn't read until he found out he could. Beginning to understand the usefulness of reading as a means to long-term goals and also for immediate gratification. Also discovering the usefulness, in immediate terms, of writing.

Student D. Age 10, entered Free School in Fall, 1973. Reads about first grade level, and showed no appreciable progress this year. Has been working with SLEP teacher since March.

Student E. Age 11, entered Free School in Fall, 1973. Reads at second or third grade level. Is now working with SLEP teacher. Progress and skills are hard to assess.

Among the students whose reading levels are low is one for whom English is a second language.

Preliminary attempts have been made to assess student progress in language arts skills other than reading for middle and secondary students. A record-keeping system designed to facilitate goal-setting has been devised and put into use this year. This system consists of detailed records in one area of language arts with brief information about others. The advisor, student or parent - or all three - select one area for the student to concentrate on and identify the student's needs and interests in that area. A goal and a work agreement are then established. At the end of the year progress toward that goal is assessed by the advisor. At this time students in the middle area all have a goal-setting record filled out. Twenty-six students chose writing as the area of concentration, eight chose critical thinking and five chose reading. None chose listening and no form has been devised yet for speaking. Parents were involved in goal-setting with only five students in the middle area.

Next year an intensive evaluation of goal-setting; and goal attainment is projected.

One detailed example of the way language arts is integrated into the curriculum may be worth relating in detail:

Minnesota History has been taught in all three levels at the Free School. Last year the middle social studies teacher took a group of students and a volunteer on an extended field trip for four days to visit sites relevant to the history of Minnesota. The secondary humanities teacher did a study of ancestries which included a lot of Minnesota and Minneapolis history. This year a volunteer in the primary room helped students build a model of early Minneapolis and brought in speakers about Indians and blacks in early Minneapolis.

All three of these people, and others, expressed interest in expanding these lines of study by bringing students into contact with residents of earlier Minneapolis and this year a resource person was found to facilitate those contacts. Recently thirteen middle students work on a project which meets three times a week. The day students go to visit and interview elderly residents of Minnesota. The next class meeting is used to transcribe the tapes of those interviews. In the third class meeting the students try to attain an overview of the kind of history they are studying as opposed to other kinds of history or to develop details that have come up in interviews.

The interviews have proven to be exercises in the respect and sensitivity to others that is basic to listening skills (though the interviews are taped rather than written down). Transcribing oral messages into written ones involved paragraphing, punctuation and spelling.

The end product of this class is expected to be a book or article, but no one will think it a waste if the product does not get published. The language arts coordinator and the social studies teacher both express considerable satisfaction with this course and student attendance is affected only by illness.

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READING LEVELS OF INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS IN MIDDLE
AGE GROUPS ACCORDING TO INGEGARD GRADED MATERIALS*

Aspinwall, Pa. - April, 1948 - Compiled by

GRADE LEVEL

9 year olds	Years at F.S.	a. b. c.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.	3	a. b. c.												
2.	2	a. b. c.												
3.	2	a. b. c.												
4.	3	a. b. c.												
5.	2	a. b. c.												
6.	1	a. b. c.												

10 year olds	Years at F.S.	a. b. c.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.	1	a. b. c.												
2.	2	a. b. c.												
3.	1	a. b. c.												
4.	2	a. b. c.												
5.	2	a. b. c.												
6.	2	a. b. c.												
7.	3	a. b. c.												
8.	2	a. b. c.												
9.	3	a. b. c.												

*Data included to cover secondary students. More detailed data have been collected for primary students but have been omitted in time to be included in this report. Data on secondary students is available at the beginning of the year, but very little year-end data is available. When available, the secondary student is included in the results of the year.

GRADE LEVELS

11 year olds	Years at F.S.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	a.											
		b.											
		c.											
2.	2	a.											
		b.											
		c.											
3.	3	a.											
		b.											
		c.											
4.	2	a.											
		b.											
		c.											
5.	3	a.											
		b.											
		c.											
6.	1	a.											
		b.											
		c.											
7.	2	a.											
		b.											
		c.											
8.	2	a.											
		b.											
		c.											
9.	1	a.											
		b.											
		c.											

13 year olds	Years at F.S.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.	2	a.											
		b.											
		c.											
2.	2	a.											
		b.											
		c.											
3.	2	a.											
		b.											
		c.											
4.	1	a.											
		b.											
		c.											
5.	3	a.											
		b.											
		c.											

GRADE LEVELS

12 year olds	Years at F.S.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.	3	a. b. c.											
2.	2	a. b. c.											
3.	2	a. b. c.											
4.	2	a. b. c.											
5.	1	a. b. c.											
6.	2	a. b. c.											
7.	1	a. b. c.											
8.	2	a. b. c.											
9.	2	a. b. c.											
10.	1	a. b. c.											
11.	2	a. b. c.											
12.	1	a. b. c.											
13.	3	a. b. c.											
14.	1	a. b. c.											
15.	3	a. b. c.											
16.	1	a. b. c.											
17.	2	a. b. c.											

recurrent problem with student teachers either failing to show up or showing up at unexpected times.

In the gym as many as four middle students can help with primary gym time. They sign up and speak of that time as "working in the gym with the little kids" or something similar. They were prepared for this move by being denied access to the gym during primary students' time until they were clear about who was really allowed in the gym at that time. A few were then invited to "work" in the gym and by that time considered it a rare privilege to be earned. The primary students determined how many middle students could be there at any one time (four) and students are limited in the number of times they may sign up in any one week. Some of these middle students are very good at settling disputes among younger students.

Secondary students in the gym seem to prefer volleyball above all other activities and have tolerated the absence of the physical education coordinator and the presence of middle students in secondary gym rather than have their game inhibited. When the physical education coordinator is busy with something else, secondary students become responsible for the gym or miss the chance to play volleyball. Similarly, when too many secondary students are out of school the remainder will invite middle students to fill the gaps in the team and go on with the game.

Some less structured, sometimes very casual, interage teaching occurs. In the primary room, for example, a 12:00 writing class attracts middle students who wander in and start helping primary kids spell words. In the math room the math teacher is often busy, a student impatient, and another student eager to demonstrate his own skill by helping out. These instances occur anywhere a skill and a need match. When primary students have their own time in the math room a middle student may "hang around" and either decide to help or be asked to help.

In the art room, students of various ages mix fairly freely. They may either simply work in the same room during open art or older students may help younger ones find things if the teacher steps out.

In the shop no cross-age teaching has been observed. A class for secondary students who were to be trained to teach shop in primary did not produce a high level of commitment and first one and then the other of the secondary students dropped out. Because of the nature of the tools and materials in shop the coordinator does not leave the room in the charge of students even for short periods.

Cooperative interaction has occurred on field trips. A primary student acted as a guide (with his father) for a middle field trip, and two middle students have accompanied the secondary students on a trip to California where they will work with the United Farm Workers.

This year's study was designed to deal with interactions between levels and did not take sufficient account of the age and maturity gap between, for example, younger middle students and older middle students or the closeness in age of older middle and younger secondary students. In the primary room, too, variations of ages of students has not been part of the evaluation. Other neglected interactions are between students of different skill levels and different cliques within a single classroom group, and the formation of those cliques. Random assignments and a familiarity of teacher who have worked in the school may make it possible to better deal with some of these factors next year.

The middle staff has faced the problems that arise from student cliques. Exclusions and behavior designed to hurt each other's feelings are only two of such problems that have developed since the beginning of school. The middle staff have worked together in coordinated efforts to deal with cliques, to improve interpersonal relations among middle students and reduce name-calling and bullying, to stop food throwing in the lunchroom and harassment of other students when they are working. A student described the situation in the early part of the year as "...chaos." and said, "The teachers responded with rules and the students... felt challenged."

Continuing efforts to find successful ways of dealing with students' behavior led to calling large meetings of all middle students to talk about behavior. The most recent of these meetings consisted of an ultimatum by the staff that staff would not attend hot lunch unless student behavior in the lunchroom improved. The line of consequences was made explicit--no staff escort, no hot lunch. The staff then withdrew and instructed students to stay in the room until they had solved the problem. They were out within minutes to announce a solution and were sent back to select someone to enforce their rules. Two older boys, totally different in color, temperament, and interests were selected and have been serving (without police brutality) since March.

In the primary room student interactions reached a crisis in November when the number of fights, the amount and intensity of name-calling and the general noise and disorder became altogether too much. A parent meeting and a series of staff meetings were called and some parent volunteers and the resource training director supplied additional personnel for a large effort to reset the tone of the room. A little later other meetings were held with primary staff and resource people to arrange for more resource area time for primary students.

In the course of, and following, this crisis the enrollment dropped to 33 students in the primary area and parent participation had a brief peak, then dropped off. The room is now quieter, students smile more and there is a more productive atmosphere.

The two primary teachers, who will not return next year, and others who have worked in the primary room recommended that next year from the beginning of the year younger and older--or more and less mature--students be separated for some portion of the day. Younger or less mature students need more rest than they get when exposed to older students all day.

Observers who have spent time in the primary room and have some degree of expertise with children have recommended better use of expert consultants to identify and deal with students who do not function well in the primary room.

Concern is expressed that some students may have problems requiring the services of persons skilled in recognizing, learning, and behavior problems.

Recommendations that have come out of the middle area this year are that more thought be given to matching advisors and advisees and in making up advisee groups so that they can function better together.

POLICY ROLES OF THE PRINCIPAL AND GOVERNING BOARD

Since the 1973 evaluation plan was written new dimensions of this issue have emerged. The role of individual staff members and groups of staff in policy seems to amount to more than simply carrying out or failing to carry out the policy decisions made elsewhere. The staff cabinet was formed this year and that body has had a role in policy-making.

Sixteen areas of policy were identified in the mid-year report. They are:

1. Hiring
 - a. process
 - b. decisions
2. Staff accountability
3. Recordkeeping and reporting to parents: minimums
4. Space utilization
5. Budget priorities
6. Evaluation plans
7. Research requests
8. Visitor policy
9. Rules about where students may go, in and out of school
10. Admission policy
11. Waiting list
12. Suspension policy
13. Philosophy
 - a. educational (including curriculum development)
 - b. political
14. Staff development
15. Course offering
 - a. which courses will be offered
 - b. who will offer them
16. Graduation requirements

Another is identified here:

17. Governing Board make-up and function and process

History

A brief history and description of the various policy-making bodies follows:

Governing Board (From 72/73 Free School Evaluation Report)

The director of the school was uncomfortable as he found himself in the position of making decisions affecting the whole school community, present and future. In April of 1972 he proposed the concept of a governing board composed of students, staff and parents. The board would have the responsibility to make those decisions. The concept caught on.

After some initial fumbling, representatives were elected: seven students, two primary, two middle, two secondary and one Glendale Academy student; five staff representing the above three groups and Glendale; and five parents representing the same groups. The director served as a resource to and nonvoting member of the board. Each parent had an alternate to serve when the elected parent could not. A chairperson was elected from the group and, when the need became apparent, a recorder was elected . . . concerns, thoughts, suggestions of the total school community were sought out, both in meeting and by opinion polling. Any final decision was made only by the elected board members. The attempt was to try to arrive at consensus. Failure to achieve consensus required a vote. Sometimes this process worked well, sometimes not.

The board and its committees functioned through the summer. For one two-week period it was the only continuum for the school--the past director was no longer on the payroll, the new director, chosen by the Governing Board, was not yet on the payroll.

In the summer of 1973 workshops on governance were conducted and the issue of representation was discussed. Prolonged discussions on major issues continued into the first meetings of the new Governing Board in November, 1973, which consisted of five staff, five students and five parents. Some problems of representation are:

1. Shall representation be proportional as a given percent of each section of the community, staff, students and parents or shall equal representation be given to each section?
2. How should the sections be determined? Geographical areas for parents was decided on instead of parents of primary, middle and secondary students. Staff representation is partly by the age level they teach, but there are five staff members and only three age levels in the school, so the representation is not evenly divided. Student representation is by middle and secondary age levels.
3. How can student representation be effective? Students have a low tolerance for the lengthy discussions that occur in the Governing Board meetings. Some parents and staff have felt that student representatives were at the mercy of the power struggles between the factions in the school community.
4. Who shall vote for representatives? All students and each staff member and parent have a vote. Dispute arises over the voting rights of single parents--do they each get two votes so that all families are equally represented, do two parents to a family cast one vote, or do all parents get one vote regardless of the number of parents to a family? Since 63% of Free School students come from single parent families, this discussion is not easily resolved.

These problems, and recurring problems of process, continue to take up large portions of the Governing Board's time.

Staff Cabinet

The staff cabinet was designed to make the kinds of decisions that had taken so much time in staff meetings the previous year. It was formed in September, 1973 and consisted of the director, the resource training director and up to five other staff who attended meetings in varying configurations. It was, at one time, intended to have a rotating membership and to deal with problems surrounding staff accountability. Neither of these items have become a part of the way the cabinet functions.

Principal

The director or principal was hired at the beginning of year two, in the summer of 1972. The hiring was done after long interviews had been conducted with large portions of the Free School community. The Governing Board voted on a final choice of applicants and a recommendation was presented to and accepted by the Minneapolis Public Schools administration.

The 1973-74 plan for the school calls for the phasing out of the principal and his replacement by an administrative aide and the Governing Board. As an evaluation of progress toward that goal the 73/74 evaluation plan required an identification of internal obstacles to the principal's phasing out and a description of the policy roles of the various bodies in the school. The mid-year report describes several internal obstacles to the policy-making role of the Governing Board. This report will describe policy roles as reflected in decisions made in each of the seventeen identified areas.

Analysis

1. Hiring: Process and decisions

Hiring and rehiring recommendations are made by the personnel committee

which reports to the Governing Board. The governing board has the duty of reviewing the recommendations of personnel committee and accepting or rejecting them. The principal then conveys these decisions to the SEA director.

A process for staff evaluation was formulated by the personnel committee in February, 1973 and approved by the Governing Board. It established the number and distribution of interviews, designed an interview form to establish uniformity of information gathered, and established the rules of its own meetings including the degree of confidentiality it required.

Another process for making rehiring decisions was presented in the 72/73 evaluation report and was passed as policy by the Governing Board in summer, 1973. This process was not implemented because it required cooperation from the staff which was not forthcoming from all.

The process finally used for rehiring decisions was designed by the personnel committee with the help of a consultant in February, 1973 and was not submitted to the Governing Board for approval. No part of the process used by the personnel committee of the previous year was adopted by the present committee regarding the number of interviews or questionnaires necessary for reaching objective conclusions nor about the confidentiality of the proceedings of the committee. The committee which made these decisions about rehiring process consisted of five staff, six parents and two students. A third student was sought but none could be found to serve.

Rehiring recommendations were made by the committee and approved by the Governing Board. One of these recommendations was rejected by the principal. The staff, a large percentage of secondary students and the Governing Board challenged his right to do that and he rescinded his decision. Another decision was rejected by the SEA director.

Decisions about hiring new staff for 1974/75 have not been made at this time.

2. Staff accountability

No clear decisions have been made about staff accountability, with the exception of decisions mentioned in the next section on recordkeeping and reporting to parents.

Issues that remain unsettled are whether the pattern of accountability is to be heirarchical or non-heirarchical within the school, what set of goals the staff will be accountable for, what the signs of accountability will be and how complaints regarding accountability will be dealt with.

3. Recordkeeping and reporting to parents

Decisions about minimums in reporting to parents were made in a staff workshop during the summer. Some staff follow the minimums set down in that meeting, while others follow the recommendations that appeared in the 72/73 evaluation report. No decisions have been made about what will be done if the minimums are not met.

A resolution about minimums in recordkeeping was made in the Governing Board in March, 1973. It specified the required records to be kept and determined who should keep them. A deadline was set for the compilation of a minimum set of records, an agreement was established later for review of the record folders. The deadline was not met by any staff and the Governing Board is planning to deal with the matter again.

4. Space utilization

Decisions about space utilization are complicated. In the spring of year one, 1972, the Free School began plans to expand its student population and the space within the building it occupied. At that time decisions made by the Governing Board allotted large general areas for each of three age levels and smaller class areas for resource areas. At least two small spaces, a tutoring room and the principal's office changed their uses during the year according to private agreements between individuals, ratified in full staff meetings.

Final decisions about implementation of the plan for space use in 73/74 were made by the owners of the building and the school administration and were influenced by the fact that the Free School would not be in that building beyond the spring of 1974. The plan was designed by a committee with the help of a consultant and approved by the Governing Board.

5. Budget priorities

Within the budget allotments from the Minneapolis Public Schools and National Institute of Education (NIE) the Free School has always had and exercised a lot of choice about salaries. The number of positions the Free School is entitled to was estimated at a total sum of money which was then divided at a lower rate and distributed over a larger staff. The decision to proceed this way was made in hiring meetings during the first summer between the parents who were involved at that time and the staff who were being hired.

At the end of year one a similar decision was made by the Governing Board about staff budget for 72/73.

In the spring of year two a three-year plan was drawn up by the principal with input from a great variety of sources and that plan included major budget priorities for staff, equipment and supplies. The plan was discussed and voted on at three open Governing Board meetings--decisions made one night were reversed the next and the final draft was a compromise voted in by the Governing Board. The budget assumed for that plan was not the budget allowed by the National Institute of Education (NIE) and major cuts had to be made. A budget committee of staff and parents worked over spring vacation making those cuts and a five hour parent meeting was held to discuss them. No agreement was ever reached about the budget cuts--the budget committee did not reach consensus and the vote taken after the five hour meeting of parents was interpreted by committee members individually according to their own position. The plan finally submitted was

written by the principal based on his assessment of majority feeling and the plan's probability of success. Final details were worked out in Governing Board and consensus was reached. The Governing Board, acting as a long-range planning committee, updated this plan in Spring, '74.

6. Evaluation plans

No written evaluation plan occurred until the summer of 1973. The decision to have a written plan was made by the SEA director and heartily accepted by the Free School principal. The present internal evaluator, who was then an applicant for the position, assisted in the writing of that plan. Decisions were made by the manager of the evaluation team and the assistant, with input from the smaller summer Governing Board and the Free School principal. Final decisions were made by the Level One evaluation manager subject to approval by the Governing Board and the SEA director. The Governing board did not discuss the plan except at the start of August.

The evaluation plan for 1974/75 has been discussed in general outline by the internal evaluator, the principal, and the evaluation team manager. Some input from staff has been solicited, but little time was available since staff were busily occupied with decisions surrounding rehiring and long-range planning at the time. The Governing Board has not yet considered the plan.

7. Research requests

Research requests are processed through a system designed in accordance with school administration policy by the Level One evaluation team. Only one decision was made regarding research within the school this year and that was by the principal and internal evaluator.

8. Visitor policy

Statements have been made at staff meetings that no visitors are to be in the school except during the Wednesday visitor times which are scheduled through the SEA office and managed by a salaried parent. The decision seems to date back to year one and has something of the nature of custom rather than law.

The decision about how one knows a visitor on sight hasn't been made. The school is full of volunteers and prospective volunteers most of the time. Ex-students frequently come back to visit, and students bring friends to visit with and without clearance. Parents are not held to be visitors. Strangers are confronted on a random basis by students or staff and a few staff members are persistent in asking unauthorized visitors to leave the school.

9. Rules about where students may go, in and out of school

At the beginning of year three, more restrictive rules than had previously existed about student movement were made. These rules were made by individual staff members or groups of staff. They were not submitted to the Governing Board nor to the staff cabinet for approval. Some discussions were held among staff achieving agreement on and consistency of those rules.

10. Admission policy

At present no admission policy exists. A committee has been set up by the Governing Board to establish one.

Decisions about which students to admit are now made by the principal and at least one staff member from the relevant age level. This process has been officially approved by the Governing Board.

11. Waiting list

A waiting list is kept of students who apply for admission after the school has been filled. No decision has been made about how that list is to be prioritized or in what order students are to be added to it or removed from it.

12. Suspension policy

The decision to suspend a student for a day or part of a day is often made by a staff member. In the primary area someone must call a parent before a student can be sent home. In the middle area the advisor is likely to make the decision, sometimes on the recommendation of another teacher.

The decision to suspend a student for more than a day is made by the advisor and the principal with the help of the counselor or the social worker and the persons involved in the relevant incident. The largest number of suspensions occurred in November and May.

13. Philosophy

The school's educational philosophy and its political philosophies are closely intertwined. Decisions range from an attempt to get parent ratification of a document called the action principles to the kinds of in-the-field decisions that reflect some personnel educational philosophy.

Educational philosophy:

The decision to follow a language arts program based on the writing of Kenneth Gruber, James Moffett and others was made by individual teachers with with help of the language arts committee. The size of this kind of program is more or less uniform throughout the school.

Such a decision might be considered as constituting curriculum development since the plan for 1974-1975 specified the titles of coordinators in math/science, reading, arts, music, etc., and also. Decisions about curriculum development are usually made by the people sent by the Pre-curriculum Training Director with individual staff members. No such decisions have come before the Governing Board to interpret the decision about curriculum development to organize a school-wide, two week unit on China, was put before the staff as a whole, but it is not clear if a decision was made. The decision was only partly implemented and seems to have been abandoned.

Decisions about educational philosophy are made by individual teachers. No policy has ever been established by the school and opinion and approaches vary widely. There is no consensus on the following items:

1. the need to the way to establish a child-centered teaching approach,
2. the significance of the way to deal with student refusal to make and follow through on academic commitments,

3. the way to promote the right kind of affective learning, or
4. the need or the way to promote free exploration of issues and avoid the teaching of conclusions.

A curriculum committee was formed by a parent and adopted by the Governing Board in January, 1974.

Political philosophy:

A paper prepared during summer workshops on the school's political philosophy was adopted as a working paper toward a statement of the philosophy of the school and was distributed to parents in October, 1973 for reaction. Meetings for their revision were held in November and a workshop was held in March, 1974. Two revised versions were circulated to the community to see which version was preferred. Votes were tallied, declared inconclusive, and no action was taken by the Governing Board.

14. Staff development

Decisions about staff development needs are made by individual staff members or groups of staff members. Requests for release time or approval of Teacher Center proposals are presented to the staff cabinet for decisions. No priorities or guidelines have been adopted by the Governing Board.

15. Course offerings

General outlines for course offerings are contained in job descriptions and academic minimums are contained in graduation requirements. These documents were written by committees and have been approved by the Governing Board. Decisions about what courses are actually offered are made by groups of staff, usually by level. Sometimes a team of staff offers a course together which is open to both middle and secondary students or to older primary and younger middle students. Class lists are not ratified by the staff as a whole, the staff cabinet, or the Governing Board. No formal approval process occurs with the principal and he has never vetoed a class.

16. Graduation requirements

Free School graduation requirements were adopted by the Governing board in the spring of 1970. They have a certain amount of built-in flexibility, and final decisions are negotiated between the student and his adviser and the student's graduation committee.

Summary:

Information for this section was ascertained by examination of incomplete sets of student records, interviews with students, and staff members, and extensive observation of staff meetings. Informal interviews were used to piece together information about when decisions were made and extensive observation over a period of three years to document policy and implementation.

In the absence of clearly defined policy decisions which might provide direction to daily teaching, daily decisions concentrate the weight of policy. It might be possible to define a policy as any principle which is referred to as sufficient for daily behavior. By this definition little policy exists.

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73/74	Decisions Made by	Ratified by	Referred to	Implemented	Status of Policy
Rehiring process	Personnel Committee			in part	decisions will be reviewed by GB
Rehiring Decisions	Personnel Committee	Governing Board	SEA director	some rejected	
Staff accountability					No policy has been established
Record-keeping	Evaluation Committee	Governing Board	Staff	in part	decision may be policy
Reporting to parents	included in above			in part	
Space use	staff and parents and students	GB in outline	administration		Policy exists in plans for next year
Budget priorities	planning committee v principal	GB	SEA and NIE		Policy carries over from last year
Evaluation plans	Principal & eval. team	SEA director	Evaluator		Not certain
Research requests	Evaluation team & prin.				Policy comes from NPS
Visitor policy	unclear	unclear	staff and students	in part	policy is quoted not always fol.
Rules Re: where students go	staff v groups of staff		Students	Yes in early part of year	not clear
Admissions	principal v staff		Applicants		Principal & staff may decide
Wait-list list	included in above				
Suspensions	staff & prin.				Process has been established
Philosophy: Educational	Ind. staff groups of staff				no policy has been established
Philosophy: Political	staff as a whole			in part	under revision
Staff Development	Ind. staff or groups of staff				no policy has been established
Course offerings what.....	Grad. req. comm. ind. staff	Grad. req. by GB 72/73	Grad. req. to community	yes	Grad. req. leave room for many ind. decisions
Course offerings: who will offer.	Job desc. comm. ind. staff	Job desc. by GB 72/73	Staff	in part	Job Desc. leave room for ind. decisions
Graduation Req. who has met them.	Advisors & prin. & comm.	GP	Graduate		Established in 72/73
Governing Board make-up function and process	Governing Board		community when vote is required for election		no clear and continuing policy exists.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The 1973/76 plan for the Free School stipulates increasing use of volunteers to provide the kind of individual attention and the wide range of activities presently available to Free School students after federal funding ends. Progress toward this goal has been of special concern to those resource people whose programs are expected to depend entirely on volunteers after 1975/76. A brief report is included here as a matter of record.

A log of one week's volunteers at the end of this section shows that 11 parents spent a total of 71 hours in the school and that volunteers or student teachers from the colleges and universities numbered 13 for a total of 66 hours. The range of activities is wide and the degree of involvement tends heavily toward actual teaching rather than assisting.

The Community Features Coordinator asked staff to evaluate the volunteer program in May. Ten staff returned a questionnaire on which they were asked to say if they felt positive or negative about the volunteer program, how many volunteers they had worked with, and what positive and negative experiences they had had with volunteers. At the same time the internal evaluator started interviewing staff on this subject but stopped upon discovering that the data was already being collected. Four of those interviews were completed.

Of the ten staff members who replied to the questionnaire six felt positive or very positive about the program and four reported mixed feelings. None felt totally negative.

Staff reported working with one to 15 or more volunteers in the course of the year. Heaviest use of volunteers was in the primary area and in language arts. Since some language arts volunteers worked in the primary room there is overlap in the count for those areas.

The positive remarks about the value of volunteers were:

They enjoy working with kids.

They provide new faces, new approaches, new ideas.

They are a source of information and materials.

They are a source of energy and enthusiasm when staff energy and enthusiasm run low.

One staff member said that volunteers are able to work best when a class has clear objectives and procedures are made clear to the volunteer who wants to help with a project, or when the volunteer comes in with a definite plan and works independently.

Three of the staff members interviewed by the internal evaluator said the best source for volunteers had been the University of Minnesota. One offered the explanation that students were able to see themselves as having a short-term commitment to the school--they could come in, do a unit, and leave. Parents were more likely to be concerned with on-going objectives and processes. No staff members said specifically that parents were the best source for volunteers but several mentioned especially positive experiences with parent volunteers.

Problems listed among the most negative aspects of the program were:

students not showing up for volunteer's classes,
scheduling conflicts,

students not being respectful of volunteers,

not enough time to plan activities with volunteers,

volunteers not being consistent and reliable,

not enough volunteers,

not enough time from volunteers,

volunteers not knowing why they were there (or what to do), and

volunteers demanding staff time for chit-chat.

The complaints of "not enough volunteers and not enough time working with volunteers are listed on questionnaires under "negative aspects".

clearly, in context, intended to be positive comments about the value of working with volunteers and the desire to have more to work with.

In volume, the number of negative remarks exceeds the number of positive ones--that is only because staff were in agreement about the value and most staff listed the same positive aspects. Negative comments were more diverse.

From two years of observation the problem that seems most apparent in the volunteer program is its chanceiness. By remarkable good fortune the math room had, last year, lots of reliable help from volunteers. Although some volunteers have worked well in the math room this year the amount of help available has not equaled last year's and the difference is felt. The pottery room, which can only be kept open with volunteer help, also had remarkably good volunteer staff last year and this year has not been available to students nearly enough.

There is also a continuing need for a full-time staff person to screen, orient and coordinate volunteers. It is difficult to envision that need disappearing.

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3/20/74

SOUTHEAST FREE SCHOOL

STATISTICAL LOG FOR WEEK OF FEB. 25-MARCH 1

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

<u>Task or Assignments</u>	<u>No. of Vol.</u>	<u>No. of Hours</u>	<u>Total Vol.</u>	<u>Total Hours</u>
Shop teachers	2	9		
German teacher	1	3		
Chorus teacher	1	3		
Primary level history teacher	1	12		
Pottery teachers	2	30		
Conducts class "Explorations"	1	3		
Primary level aide	1	3		
Tutor	1	6		
Driver for recycling project	1	2		
			Totals:	11 71 hrs.

OTHER COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

German/flute and art teachers	3	17 $\frac{1}{2}$		
Tutor	1	2		
			Totals:	4 19 $\frac{1}{2}$ hrs.

UNIVERSITY VOLUNTEERS

Team teachers for spanish and reading	3	28		
Drafting teachers	2	4		
Language arts assistants	4	15		
Social studies teacher	1	9		
Reading & math tutors	2	8		
Piano teacher	1	2		
			Totals:	13 66 hrs.

Student teacher & intern	2	80	2	80 hrs.
			Grand Totals:	... 30 236 $\frac{1}{2}$ hrs.

NOTE: During the week of Feb. 25-March 3, the Free School had six meetings involving 37-45 volunteers and parents, for an additional 222 hours of volunteers.

*The word "teacher" here implies actually teaching a class.

*Included the two student teachers in the Free School too, since the community coordinator is equally involved with them as the other volunteers.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The Free School graduation requirements were written by a committee of staff, students and parents and approved by the Governing Board in the spring of 1973. For the first class of graduates the requirements came as something of a surprise. The second class had more time to become acquainted with them before trying to meet them.

It has not been possible for the internal evaluator to monitor the progress of students toward meeting those requirements, so all information has been obtained through interviews.

The major change reported by staff in this year's process was the graduation seminar in which all graduates met together to explore ways of meeting the requirements and discovering resources available to help.

Students interviewed indicate that few changes in the requirements have occurred this year. One student said the math requirements turned out to be more complicated than described in the general requirements. One felt they had generally been tightened up--no carrying projects into the summer, for example.

All said the requirements were reasonable, most that they wouldn't know for years how relevant they were, felt that they were flexible enough and they received enough help with them. All commented on the usual high school process where credit for a course, even if the grade is a "D", is evidence of knowledge. In the Free School requirements, they said, one must really know things to meet them.

One student said that the student should be the judge of whether requirements have been met unless challenged by a teacher. This student thought the graduation committee was not a good idea and should be dropped.

The graduation requirements seem to have remained constant over two years. They allow changes in content without altering the basic requirements that a student be equipped with the skills required for the world she or he is likely

to meet. The outline of skills required constitutes as clear a statement as now exists about what a Free School student should be, become or be able to do.

Next year's evaluation plan includes a study of the impact those requirements have on the curriculum.

Approved by Governing Board, Feb. 21, 1973

SOUTHFAST FREE SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURE

Free School defines its graduation requirements in four very broad areas of basic skills and responsibility: (1) communication and language; (2) mathematics and science; (3) social perspective and the humanities; (4) personal achievement and independence. In each of these areas every student will show a minimum level of achievement. In at least two of these areas each student will show proficiency beyond the minimum.

The first section below gives brief statements of "minimum achievement" plus examples of "proficiency" for the four areas. Section II outlines how Free School students may request and be awarded their Minneapolis High School diplomas.

I. REQUIREMENTS

Communication and Language

Minimum achievement in this area means:

- (1) You can use the mass-media (newspapers, magazines, TV, movies) with a critical sense of their points of view, and an awareness of other viewpoints, too. This means knowing where the media are coming from, as news or information sources, opinion formers, entertainers, advisers.
- (2) You can read adult reading level books and clearly re-tell or summarize what they are about -- both by speaking and by writing.
- (3) You can tell about yourself: what's happened to you, what you have done, how you think and feel, in two or more of the following ways: essay, song, art, film, lecture, tape, drama, journal, poem, letter, job application, etc.
- (4) You can respond in speaking or writing to opinions you disagree with, stating your own ideas and feelings and the reasons for them.

For instance: you can defend your opinion in talking with other people; you can write a well thought out letter-to-the-editor.

(5) In group situations, you can get across what you want to say, and hear what other people are saying -- even when they are different from you in age, sex, race, class, customs, vocabulary, values, etc.

Additional participation in this area may be shown by such activities as:

- learning a foreign language.
- helping other people learn what you know and care about.
- getting across your ideas in some way other than speaking; for instance dance, music, mime, graphic arts, film or video reporting, etc.
- carrying out a project in imaginative or creative writing, for publication.
- researching, organizing, and writing up a report or essay on a topic important to you, which you want to be important to other people, too.
- etc.

MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

Minimum achievement in this area means

- (1) You are thoroughly familiar with what the following things mean, as well as how to do them: measurement, number, ratio, percent, proportion, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division of whole numbers, fractions and decimals.
- (2) You can show that you know the basics of geometry, and how to use these basics in problems of perimeter, area, volume, angles, symmetry, and similar triangles.
- (4) You can figure out the steps in solving a mathematical or scientific

problem.

- (5) You understand and can practice the activities meant by "scientific method" and "inductive inference".
- (6) You can observe things in your natural environment and note differences and similarities; ask questions; collect, record and organize information; draw conclusions and test them to see if you are correct; and write down what you saw and did.
- (7) You can read an article or see a program on a current scientific topic, such as ecosystems, or an energy crisis, or sickle-cell anemia, or heliography, and can understand it well enough to explain it to someone else.
- (8) You know enough about your body to know basically how it works, how heredity works, how different types of diseases enter and work on the body, such as V.D., sickle cell anemia, etc., and how to stay healthy (food, rest, etc.)
- (9) You know enough about your natural environment to tell the difference between living and non-living things, understand basic relationships (plant to plant, and animal to animal) in terms of such things as parasitism, predators, herbivores, etc., know what is meant by "survival of the fittest", and have begun to think about "crisis survival" (over-population, intense air, water, land, pollution, or nuclear warfare).
- (10) You know the names and groupings, uses and effects of America's most popular drugs.

Additional proficiency in this area might be demonstrated by such activities as:

-- carrying out an independent scientific study or research project of your own.

- learning how computers work, what they are being used for, and how to write simple programs.
- studying the theory behind and what has been done with one major scientific discovery (e.g. the transistor, penicillin, DNA, general relativity), and know something about the discoverers.
- in-depth study of mathematics beyond arithmetic: algebra, geometry, trigonometry, calculus.
- etc.

SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE COMPETENCE

Minimum competence in this area is as follows:

- (1) You have a basic grasp of world geography (physical, political, economic) and human population groups (culture, values, life-styles).
- (2) You have a basic background in United States history, including the Constitution and Bill of Rights, viewpoints and problems of minority groups, and know that a country is honored or respected elsewhere in the world.
- (3) You know your own cultural roots and values, can talk about influences shaping your life, and can identify your own "place in history" -- starting with Mine specific today.
- (4) You have information and ideas about the emerging world you will live in, major conflicts and opportunities before you and how you choose to deal with them.
- (5) You are familiar with the "isms" of today (communism, capitalism, racism, sexism, socialism, classism, imperialism etc.) and can define them and identify where and how they operate.
- (6) You are exploring and thinking about at least one alien, foreign or different culture from your own.
- (7) You can come up with what you need to know in order to do something

about a practical political or cultural problem (e. g. financing Mexico trips for Free School students).

Additional proficiency in this area might be shown by such activities as:

- working with a local community organization to achieve some particular political or social reform.
- traveling to another place, learning your way around, and doing an analysis of how it is different from our place.
- becoming an expert on some particular person or period of history (e.g. the Chinese revolution), some particular author or artist (e.g.) Langston Highes, Berthold Brecht), some particular social controversy (e.g. women's liberation).
- preparing and leading a project on How to Be Happy in 1984.
- etc.

PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE AND INITIATIVE

Minimum competence in this area means

- (1) You have found and held a job (paid or volunteer) where your performance was evaluated by someone not connected with Free School.
- (2) You can tell about your plans for six months from now, or at least be able to offer some realistic alternatives.
- (3) You have developed a particular skill or interest of your own, which you enjoy, are proud of, and are glad to be asked about.
- (4) You have enough self-discipline to take responsibilities which other people can count on, and also to let people know when you cannot accept a responsibility.
- (5) You are learning how you "come across" to different sorts of other people, and how they affect you.
- (6) You can suggest people for your own Graduation Review Committee and help design your own "final exam."

Additional proficiency in this area might be demonstrated by such activities as:

- almost any venture or project the student defines and the advisor agrees with.

II. PROCEDURE

The heart of this system is that each student shares in making each decision about his own graduation from Free School -- when he thinks he can be "ready", what social expectations are appropriate for him, how to meet these expectations, who should evaluate his performance, how to evaluate, whether in fact he should graduate, and what should be the final entry in his MPS records. A student may be certified for the diploma any time after his 16th birthday. The procedure is as follows:

- (1) Student and advisor agree, at least three months in advance (six months in advance after 1972-73) on a target date for graduation.
- (2) Student and advisor, working with other staff, agree on a written contract for the final several months work.
- (3) Contract covers minimum competence requirements not yet met, plus additional proficiency areas agreed to be appropriate for the student.
- (4) Student and advisor agree on student's Graduation Review Committee, to include:
 - two staff (other than advisor)
 - one Free School parent (chosen from Governing Board)
 - one secondary student
 - one adult not formally related to Free SchoolAdvisor serves as student's advocate before this committee.
- (5) Committee meets monthly with student and advisor, to monitor progress on the learning contract.

(6) At completion of contract period Committee meets with student and advisor for final graduation interview -- 1 - 1 1/2 hours in an informal setting. Advisor summarizes his own and other teachers' records of student's accomplishments. Committee and student discuss these (if necessary) and any other areas or topics considered relevant within graduation requirements.

(7) On basis of interview, previous meetings, and School records, Committee recommends for or against graduation. Positive recommendation goes (in writing with comments if desired) to Governing Board for ratification. Negative recommendation goes to the student and the advisor, with reasons, and with suggestions for additional work to be completed.

(8) Governing Board ratifies committee recommendation and certifies that student has completed Free School graduation requirements. Official diploma is awarded by MUHS. Unofficial and real diploma is conferred by Free School Governing Board.

CONCLUSIONS

It is clear from data gathered and observations made this year that the Free School has much to offer students in the way of innovative learning situations. Its success in dealing with the problems outlined in this report--and other problems as well--may well determine its ability to go on offering those advantages.

The Governing Board exhausts itself without making the decisions that most need to be made. They still have little influence on the daily functioning of the school, the continued training of the staff, the development of curriculum and the priorities that underlie those processes. They have functioned most influentially in the hiring and evaluation of staff. Those actions occur once a year, briefly and traumatically, and are forgotten until the next year. The balance of their time is likely to be spent determining their own procedures. Perhaps if the Governing Board shifted its emphasis from staff evaluation to staff development and curriculum development some of the power struggles could be avoided and they would be able to operate more effectively.

In the school, there has been a great loss of students and especially of black students. Among the reasons given is the lack of emphasis on basic skills. More concentration on skills, and better documentation of skills, are needs that seems to be indicated.

There has also been a considerable loss of staff for a variety of reasons. The school suffers from the amount of time new staff people need to adjust to the environment. Interstaff relationships need to be dealt with on a consistent basis and efforts made to avoid such losses.

The school has not generally made adequate use of resources available to it through the Minneapolis Public School System.

Student behavior is often dealt with on a crisis basis. Staff training in child development and behavior problems and the use of resources available might

help.

Decisions are also often made on a crisis basis. The internal evaluator has not been effective in feeding data into decision-making processes. Better planning and more thought about what kind of data will be relevant to decisions is needed.

Secondary staff are not in agreement about their expectations of students. Student problems with drug use and absenteeism have not been dealt with consistently and effectively, and available resources have not been used. There are indications that better use of staff time might alleviate these problems, or free more time for finding ways to alleviate them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations come from a variety of sources; staff members, volunteers, consultants and student support personnel from the Minneapolis Public School system, and parents. They occur in the body of the report and are repeated here for convenience.

1. In the primary room younger, or less mature, students should be separated from older students for a portion of the day for quiet or quiet activities.
2. In the middle area greater care should be given to the make-up of advisee groups and assignment of advisors so that groups can function better.
3. In the secondary area the staff should establish clear policy about student absenteeism. If the school wants to provide a year off school for some students it should make that offer clear and involve students and parents in the decisions to determine whether that is what the student needs.
4. In the secondary area student choices should be expanded by referring more students to classes at the University, Marshall-University High School, Urban Arts or other sites.
5. In the secondary area team teaching does not always show best use of staff time and could be reduced.
6. In the secondary area students now at the school should establish, with advisors and parents, expectations for next year. Consequences of not meeting those expectations should be made clear before this year ends.
7. In the secondary area cumulative records of new students should be consulted before school starts and attempts made to predict problems so that plans can be made to deal with them if they arise.
8. In all areas better use of resources available through the Minneapolis Public Schools system should be made.

RESPONSES TO THE REPORT

This report was distributed in complete rough draft form to the Governing Board on May 30, 1974 and responses were collected from that date to June 11, 1974 for publication with the report. In addition some comments were collected while the report was in progress as portions of it were given to select persons for correction. Responses are roughly grouped and sources identified as staff, student or parent.

NEEDS IDENTIFICATION

Parent:

National Institute of Education (NIE) quarterly reports list needs not mentioned here, such as the needs of quiet kids who do not demand attention or who need a quiet space to work in--problems identified by secondary staff and primary parents. Similarly there is a need of academically successful students for challenge.

Parent:

There is a big need in primary to find ways of curbing aggressive behavior. A group leader is needed to work with this and there is a need for volunteers to do work with students on a one-to-one basis regularly.

More culture classes are needed to deal with racism in terms of what the black family is and why people react as they do.

There is a need to attract and keep black students and a special effort will have to be made. Magazine subscriptions should include Jet, Ebony, and Essence.

Staff:

The staff needs skills in dealing with kids in groups and dealing with feelings before a crisis arises. The counselor needs to work on getting those skills to the staff since the counselor position will be phased out at the end of next year. The counselor needs to work on finding resources for the staff to turn to for help and advice after the counselor is gone.

Staff:

Many of the good things I saw happen and was involved in are not included. I would like to see something about choice-making, creativity, and student's skill in manipulating materials.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Staff:

The only current concern I have that I can think of in respect to the volunteer program is to summarize the number of volunteers that entered and worked in the Free School in 73/74--over 100. A good number of them were all year and some have already made plans to come back next year. They have taken an active part in the development of the volunteer program. Also the art program in the last few months has had volunteers teaching several courses.

Staff:

It is clear from voluntary remarks from staff about volunteers that there is a general and persistent need for clarification of roles and expectations throughout the school. This need may be related to the lack of policy and lack of educational philosophy mentioned in the section on governance.

GOVERNING BOARD POLICY ROLES

Staff:

There is no mention of the move to new quarters and the work of the committee for space allocation there. Those decisions involved hard work by that committee in obtaining community input and satisfying staff needs as well as it could be done.

The Governing Board should certainly see and approve the evaluation plan for 74/75.

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There is no report of the struggles of the last few months and the definition of purpose that has come out of those struggles.

Parent:

The Governing Board needs to hire a community organizer to help them organize.

STUDENT BODY

Staff:

The statistics listed here are meaningless without some sort of comparative data such as SEA wide averages. (When comparative data is available has been inserted in the text in response to this comment.)

Parent:

I would like to see the concerns in this report listed, prioritized, and used as reference throughout the community planning process.

Parent:

This report appears to be mostly summary observations. During considerable time spent in the schools.